

MDCH Rabies Vaccine Replacement Policy Changes

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Objectives:

- To understand the rationale for the change in MDCH rabies vaccine replacement policy,
- To understand how to access RxHope, a potential source of rabies vaccine for the medically indigent, and
- To understand the specific policy changes themselves, as they pertain to local health departments (LHDs) and other healthcare agencies (i.e., hospitals, urgent care centers and private practices).

The Rationale for the Change in Policy

- The State of Michigan used to produce some of its own vaccines; in 1996 the production facility was sold to BioPort. One of the vaccines produced by Michigan was rabies vaccines, which allowed the State to provide free rabies vaccine to LHDs and private providers on an as-needed basis,
- As part of the sales agreement, BioPort was required to supply approximately 2000 doses of rabies vaccine annually to the State,
- In about 2000 BioPort discontinued providing free rabies vaccine to State of Michigan,
- Instead of free vaccine, a one-time lump sum given to Michigan,
- Lump sum \$\$ used to purchase rabies vaccine and fund (in part) 3 programs: Universal Hepatitis B Program, High-Risk Hepatitis B Program and Vaccine Replacement Program,
- The costs of the latter 3 programs continue to increase, thus
- “Freeing” up the funds used to purchase rabies vaccine will allow the other programs to last longer.

Rationale (cont'd)

- All states surveyed in 2003-4 about whether they provided free rabies vaccine.
 - 28 states responded:
 - 24 states do not provide rabies vaccine
 - 2 states provide vaccine and rabies immune globulin
 - 2 states provide vaccine but expect payment
- In addition, reliable information suggested that many, if not most, of the potential rabies contact cases were handled by non-LHDs (e.g., hospitals, urgent care centers, etc.) without LHD assistance.

Michigan Rabies Vaccine Replacement Options:

- RxHope, a program for the medically indigent, i.e., an individual or family at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (for example, \$19,600 annual income for an individual or \$40,000 for a family of four),
- Medicaid, many other insurers and HMOs, especially when rabies vaccine is coded as treatment (not prophylaxis), and
- MDCH – the rabies vaccine supplier of last resort.

Note: Hospitals may have their own compassionate care programs or handle the cost of the vaccine in another way.



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If the drug you are looking for does not currently have an online application visit [Patient Assistance Information](#) to search our listing of over 1000 drugs with printable application forms.



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Log-In

Already a Registered?

If you are already an RxHope registered prescriber, Log-in first to save time and track your orders.

New To RxHope?

To become a registered prescriber, simply click the Apply Now button and continue the application for your drug selection:

RabAvert (Rabies Vaccine)

As part of the application process you will have the option to register as an RxHope member.

Apply Now

If you are a patient interested in applying

Tell your doctor about RxHope.com! Applying online is the fastest and easiest way for your doctor to apply.

Patients can also download a printable application from our [Patient Assistance Information](#) page to bring to their doctor.



Step 1: Physician Contact Information

Step 1: Enter physician DEA and office contact information.

Prescriber
Login:

E-mail Address:

Password:

Login

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Product Requested: **RabAvert (Rabies Vaccine)**

DEA Number: ? WHY

State License Number: State

State License Number Expiration: Month Day Year

Doctor Name:

First M.I. Last Designation

Specialty:

Office Contact:

Office Phone: Ext:

Office Fax:

Office Email:

Password:

Retype Password:

Last <<

Step 1 of 4

>> Next

Please be sure that **ALL** of the fields are filled in and that the information is accurate before proceeding. Failure to do so may result in a denied or delayed order. Press the submit button once (and only once) to process the above request. The next screen will appear in a moment.



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About RxHope

Contact Information

We are located in Clinton, NJ and we welcome your questions or comments:

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PO Box 4008
Clinton, NJ 08809

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Who We Are

RxHope is the only patient assistance Internet initiative financially supported by PhRMA (Pharmaceutical and Research Manufacturers of America) and participating pharmaceutical companies.

RxHope began as a grassroots effort of the Patient Assistance Managers and Directors of the PhRMA-member companies and has grown into the leading Internet-based patient assistance and sampling web portal in the pharmaceutical industry.

Each patient assistance request form has been custom-designed to the pharmaceutical company's rules engine. RxHope removes the time and costs of these programs by web-enabling labor-intensive paperwork onto the physician's computer.

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Benefits

For patients, physicians, patient advocates and pharmaceutical companies, the benefits are substantial:

- **Faster Processing**
Physicians requesting samples and their qualified applicants can receive pharmaceutical products quickly vs. weeks, or

The Specific Policy Changes

- December, 2005 memo from Jean Chabut to LHDs
- LHD attestation form (to receive rabies vaccine from MDCH)
- Sample letter from LHD to HMO or insurer (to get vaccine covered)

To: Health Officers and Medical Directors
Michigan Local Health Departments

From: Jean C. Chabut, Chief Administrative Officer
Public Health Administration

Re: State Rabies Vaccine Post-Exposure Treatment (PET) Replacement

Date:

Starting January 1, 2006, the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) will become the supplier of last resort for rabies vaccine used for PET purposes. This is because of financial pressures that MDCH faces in providing rabies vaccine free of charge at current rates of usage.

It is clear that many doses of vaccine are going to individuals who are either eligible for the vaccine through RxHope's (www.rxhope.com) medically indigent program or through their own insurance companies. Also, sometimes individuals who don't meet the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices guidelines for PET are unnecessarily vaccinated (please see <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056176.htm>). Frequently, attempts to get vaccine through these mechanisms are not made, leaving the State to shoulder a significant portion of the burden unnecessarily.

As a consequence, MDCH is requesting several things to prepare you for the January 1, 2006 changes:

1. For those local health departments that have already moved rabies PET care to the private sector successfully, there is no additional preparation that is necessary.

For Rabies Vaccine Post-Exposure Treatment (PET) Replacement by MDCH

By signing and completing the information below, I am attesting that my local health department has attempted to receive rabies vaccine PET replacement and/or reimbursement through the RxHope program (www.rxhope.com) and/or through the insurance company or HMO of a potentially rabies-exposed patient. I realize that I may also complete this form if the patient has no health insurance or HMO coverage if I have attempted to receive rabies vaccine replacement through RxHope alone.

Further, I am attesting that the attempt(s) have been unsuccessful and am requesting rabies vaccine replacement from the Michigan Department of Community Health.

Signature of Health Officer or Medical Director

Date

Printed name of Health Officer or Medical Director

Local Health Department

Patient name (please print)

Doses of rabies vaccine requested (up to 5)

Form may be mailed or faxed to:

<<Date>>

<<RE: Patient name, date of birth>>

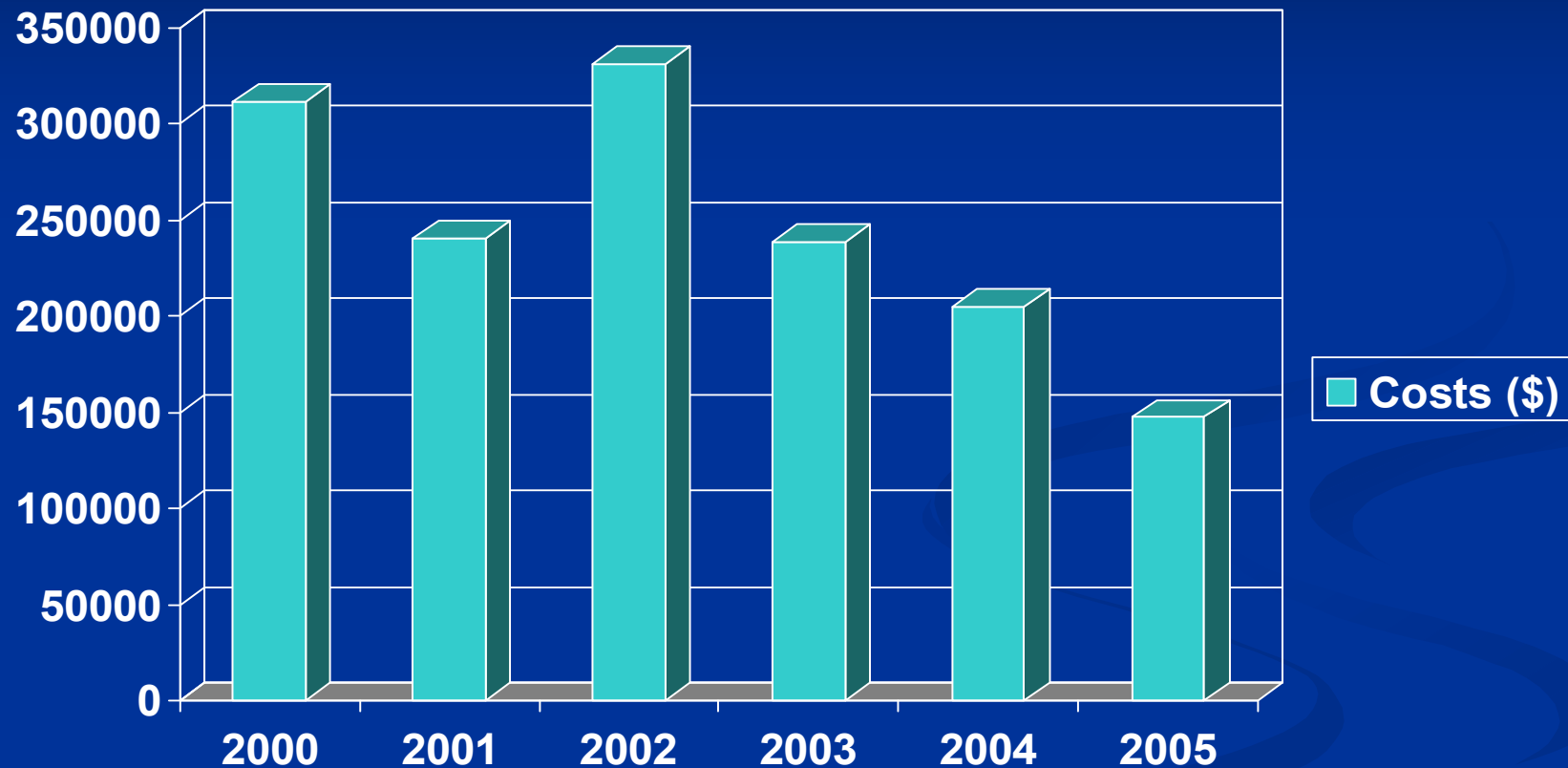
Dear <<Medical Director of HMO or health insurance name>>:

It is my understanding that << HMO or health insurance name >> has denied payment for rabies post-exposure treatment administered to <<patient name>>. We recommended that <<patient name>> undergo rabies post-exposure treatment because of <<incident>>. Such a recommendation is consistent with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (please see <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056176.htm>).

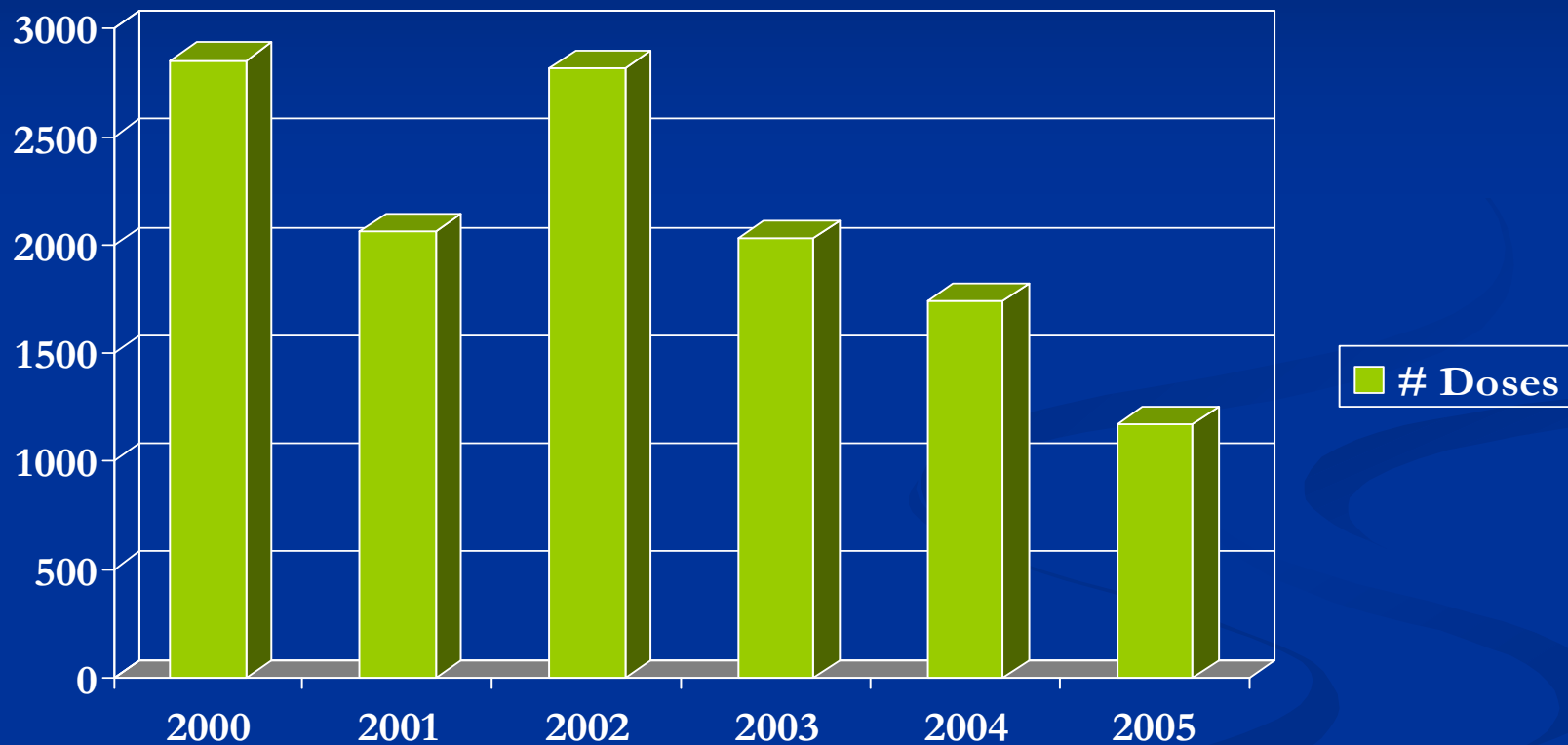
It is my understanding that << HMO or health insurance name >> would have paid for the service if a physician had made a "life-threatening diagnosis." Clinical rabies is more than a life-threatening diagnosis; it is a fatal diagnosis. We cannot wait for a person to acquire clinical rabies before we intervene. We have to apply treatment, in this case post-exposure treatment, as soon as possible after such a life-threatening exposure if we are to have any chance of preventing someone from dying of rabies. There simply is no going back to correct inadequate preventive action.

Public health officials place a high priority on rabies prevention and we reserve monies in our communicable disease budgets to pay for this service when people are uninsured. In this case, however, we contend that <<patient name's>> circumstances meet << HMO or health insurance name's>> own definition of a "life-threatening diagnosis" and therefore merit coverage.

Total Cost of MDCH-Replaced Rabies Vaccine, by Year, 2000-2005



Number of Doses of MDCH-Replaced Rabies Vaccine Used, by Year, 2000-2005



Questions?

Thanks to:

Jean Chabut

Corinne Miller

Stan Reedy

Dean Sienko

Kim Signs

Mary Grace Stobierski

Bob Swanson

Melinda Wilkins